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MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U. S. Department of Agriculture

A summary of significant events of
interest to USDA management

FEB 14 '78

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JOSEPH R. WRIGHT, JR., ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION, LEAVING USDA ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13 TO RETURN TO PRIVATE INDUSTRY.....Joe is going back to New York to serve as Vice President and General Manager of the Retail Credit Division of the First National City Bank of New York. A farewell gathering will be held on Friday, February 13, 1976 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Room 218-A. (Contact: J.P. Bolduc, SEC, ext. 77247)

FIELD INSTALLATION ADP REQUIREMENT (FIAR) TASKS COMPLETED EXCEPT DATA FLOW ANALYSIS (DUE FEB. 13) AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS (DUE FEB. 20)..... Draft of completed report planned by Feb. 27. Will be staffed with contributing agencies and final results briefed to Management Council in late March. (Contact: R. Williams, ADS, ext. 72118)

FEBRUARY DESIGNATED AFRO-AMERICAN (BLACK) HISTORY MONTH.....Agency headquarters and field installations are encouraged to commemorate the significant achievements and contributions by Blacks to this nation's growth and development through film presentations, art exhibits, portrait and biographical sketches, reading material, etc. (Contact: G. Torres, OP, ext. 72973)

J. P. BOLDUC AND STEVE DEWHURST DESCRIBE USDA'S BUDGET/EVALUATION DECISION-MAKING PROCESS TO SENATE AG COMMITTEE STAFF AS PART OF COMMITTEE'S OVERSIGHT FUNCTION UNDER BUDGET AND IMPOUNDMENT CONTROL ACT. (SEE ISSUE #28)..... Committee staff plans to develop specific operating procedures regarding program evaluations - their needs, use, application, etc. Meanwhile, agencies receiving direct requests from Congressional Units for copies of reports of program evaluations or other studies should notify OMF to assure Department level coordination. (Contact: S. Dewhurst, OMF, ext. 73226)

FIRST TWO MONTHS RESULTS OF FORMS AND REPORTS REDUCTION CAMPAIGN GOOD..... Continued improvement expected through expanded D.C. and field office effort, special review teams, staff office guidelines and audits, and employee suggestions. Through December 31, 1975, agencies reported:

	NUMBER	EST. ANNUAL SAVINGS
Forms		
Net Reduction	2,275	\$5.5 million
Reports		
Net Reduction	170	.3 million
Improved	64	.2 million
	2,509	\$6.0 million

(Contact: Pete Doyle, OMF, ext. 75725)

DID YOU KNOW THAT P&SA.....

- ... Conducted 5,091 investigations and audits during the year, including 2,073 based on complaints received from the industry.
- ... Has developed an effective cooperative program with the states. At the end of FY 1975, P&SA had 60 Federal-State agreements with agencies in 47 States.
- ... Continued its emphasis on correcting major industry problems that limit or restrict competition. As a result of a regulation prohibiting dual ownership of packers and custom feedlots, numerous packers have abandoned plans to acquire or merge into custom feedlots.
- ... Conducted a full investigation into the circumstances surrounding the filing of bankruptcy by American Beef Packers, Inc., and failing to pay for more than \$20 million worth of livestock. A report was submitted to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry and the House Committee on Agriculture.
- ... Initiated several formal actions against packers for engaging in the practice of commercial bribery. Most of these have been settled on a consent order basis.
- ... Initiated formal action against a national packing firm for discriminating in the sale of its meat products.
- ... Continued its strong emphasis on its accurate weight program, conducting 381 weighing investigations and finding indications of false weights in 55 instances. Special interest is being given to working with livestock markets and packers that have installed electronic scales to ensure that consistent accurate weights are obtained and that the sophisticated new equipment is properly installed.
- ... Investigated 36 livestock markets to determine the adequacy of services and facilities. It is estimated that construction savings of over \$150,000 and a reduction of \$850,000 in annual operating expenses would flow from the resulting recommendations.
- ... Initiated complaints against three market agencies that were found to be selling livestock to "competing" packer buyers on a rotation or turn system, a practice which in effect allocated supplies and inhibits competitive bidding.

SUMMARY OF FOLLOW-UP MEETING BETWEEN USDA AND GSA ADMINISTRATOR SENT TO DEPUTY ADMINISTRATORS FOR MANAGEMENT.....Joe Wright, J.P. Bolduc and George Knapp met with recently appointed GSA Administrator Jack Eckerd and Deputy Administrator Terry Chambers on Jan. 20 as follow up to last fall's meeting with top GSA staff. Covered: GSA service vs. policy responsibilities; conflicting GSA and agency objectives; centralization vs. decentralization of administrative services; and need for improved communications between GSA and program agencies. (Contact: George Knapp, 00, ext. 73937)

DEPARTMENT TAKING APPROPRIATE ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION FOR EEO COMPLAINTS REJECTED FOR TIMELINESS OR LACK OF PURVIEW.....Agencies urged to resolve, explain or correct rejected EEO cases where information available or obtained while reviewing complaint indicates administrative corrective action necessary. (Contact: Larry Cavallaro, 0P, ext. 77467)

OVERALL AGENCY REACTION TO WASHINGTON SPACE CONSOLIDATION PLAN POSITIVE, BUT CONCERN FOR TIMING OF IMPLEMENTATION AND POTENTIAL COST OF MOVES AND RENOVATION EXPRESSED..... Estimated renovation and moving costs for entire project to run about \$4-5 million over several years. Annual measurable savings to USDA estimated to be \$1 million plus about \$700,000 annual savings to taxpayers by reason of relocating from commercially leased to government owned space and significant (unmeasurable) benefits because of more efficient and effective working arrangements within and between agencies. Expected that most one-time costs will be covered by GSA and agency funds normally available for periodic maintenance, moves and renovations. Next Step: Invitation for bids on consultant contract for preparation of time-phased master consolidation plans to be discussed with Management Council and, hopefully, issued in next two weeks. (Contact: Bill Hamilton, 00, ext. 73141)

CSC REPORT ON COST REDUCTION IN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT SHOWS COST PER EMPLOYEE CONTINUES TO RISE BUT AT SLOWER RATE THAN OVERALL BUDGET..... Report to President showed FY 1975 cost per employee was \$16,250 compared to \$14,575 in FY 1974. No special personnel management cost reduction report required in FY 1976, but OMB to continue monitoring of agency efforts to control personnel costs. (Contact: Linda Brick, OP, ext. 73547)

CIVIL RIGHTS IMPACT STATEMENT PROCEDURE TEST PRODUCED NO MAJOR CIVIL RIGHTS POLICY OR ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS DURING TEST PERIOD..... Test results indicate that none of the 72 items received and considered by SCS, FS, and 00 from July thru September required preparation of separate Civil Rights Impact Statements. Procedure consisted of pre-assessing civil rights impact of (1) changes in or new rules, regulations or policies to be published in the Federal Register, (2) projects for which an Environmental Impact Statement is required, (3) decisions affecting program delivery to public that are not published in Federal Register, and (4) relocation of field offices or laboratories employing 10 or more employees. Planned implementation of this new procedure will be discussed shortly with the Management Council. (Contact: Percy R. Luney, OEO, ext. 74563)

LABOR DEPARTMENT NOT ISSUING SPECIAL RULES TO GOVERN HIRING PRACTICES OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES THAT ARE FEDERAL CONTRACTORS..... Even though recipient of large federal research and supply contracts are subject to nondiscrimination regulation, Labor and HEW agreed to seek ways to increase number of minorities and woman qualified for academic jobs and to encourage colleges to improve internal grievance procedures for handling job discrimination complaints without setting up special rules for schools. (Contact: M. Washington, Jr., OEO, ext. 74256)

REQUESTS FOR RELEASE OF OI REPORTS MADE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY ACTS ARE TO BE REFERRED TO THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR INFORMATION, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT, OI..... OI will determine whether to release the report. See 8 AR 118, restrictions on distribution and use, for details. (Contact: Rod Elam, OI, ext. 76979)

MANAGEMENT COUNCIL MEMBERS URGED TO REVIEW REP MEETING MINUTES.....Highlight major discussions of each meeting. Provides better understanding of significant on-going Departmental ADP actions. (Contact: H. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

USDA EXECUTIVE ORIENTATION PROGRAM PACKAGE AVAILABLE.....Developed as initial briefing for incoming GS-14 and above managers and executives. Consists of 30 minute sound and slide presentation covering USDA's history and programs; current budget; status of legislation; personnel management functions including Merit System, EEO, Labor-Management Relations, and Employee Ethics and Conduct; and USDA management process. Available through OP for \$60. (Contact: Tom Gill, OP, ext. 74258)

PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF DEPARTMENT'S MERIT PROMOTION PLAN TEST INDICATE MOST OF PLAN ACCEPTABLE AND WORKABLE.....Employees of SCS, ARS, OEO, OO, OMF and OP taking part in test to be sent questionnaires on employee reaction to proposed performance rating and employee appraisal forms. When completed and returned, field activity of test over and final analysis and evaluation to start. Evaluation report to be available by second week of March. (Contact: Bill Parent, OP, ext. 78721)

USDA'S FY 1977 BUDGET HEARINGS BEFORE HOUSE AND SENATE APPROPRIATION COMMITTEES TO START ON FEBRUARY 17.....Refer to notice OMF-B-42 for details

<u>DATE</u>	<u>AGENCIES APPEARING BEFORE</u>	
	<u>SENATE</u>	<u>HOUSE</u>
Tuesday, Feb. 17	FmHA, ARS	General Budget Statement General Agricultural Outlook
Wednesday, Feb. 18	SCS, ASCS	Secretary of Agriculture
Thursday, Feb. 19	FNS, APHIS	Secretary of Agriculture
Friday, Feb. 20	ES, CSRS, FAS Sales Manager	Farm Credit Administration
Monday, Feb 23	a/	ERS
Tuesday, Feb. 24	a/	a/
Wednesday, Feb. 25	a/	SRS
Thursday, Feb. 26	a/	APHIS
Friday, Feb. 27	a/	a/

a/ Agency hearings not scheduled.
(Contact: B. Barham or B. Gardner, OMF, ext. 75901)

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY RECESS.....The House will adjourn at the close of business on Wednesday, February 11 and return Monday, February 16. The Senate will adjourn on Friday, February 6 and also return on the 16th. (Contact: Al Duran, OMF, ext. 74654)

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULED THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1976.....Joe Wright, Jr., to address Management Council.